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NOROPS POLYLEPIS (NCN). PREDATION. *Norops polylepis*, a denizen of lowland and premontane tropical forests in southwestern Costa Rica and Panama (Savage 2002. The Amphibians and Reptiles of Costa Rica, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. 934 pp.), is known to be preyed upon by several birds, larger lizards, and snakes (Andrews 1983. In D. H. Janzen [ed.], Costa Rican Natural History, pp. 409–410. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois). Here, I report observations of an insect predator of *N. polylepis*.

At 2050 h on 27 May 2005, I observed a female Spear Bearer Katydid (*Copiphora cultricornis*) eating a *N. polylepis* as it perched on vegetation over the Quebrada Agua Buena in Rincon, Costa Rica (8°42'12"N, 83°31'13"W; datum: WGS84; elev. 238 m). The narrow, rocky stream (ca. 3 m in width) was located in lowland tropical wet forest (Holdridge 1967. Life Zone Ecology [revised ed.]. Tropical Science Center, San Jose, Costa Rica. 206 pp.). The katydid was perched upside-down on a small branch (ca. 2 m above the stream), with the body of the anole oriented upright and its

anterior end grasped by the katydid's front legs (Fig. 1). When first encountered, the head of the anole was missing, apparently it had been eaten. Over the 10 min of observation, the katydid continued to consume the anole from head to tail. *Copiphora* katydids are known to feed on diverse items including seeds, fruits, and insects (Naskrecki 2000. Katydid of Costa Rica, Vol. 1. Orthopterist's Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 164 pp.). A congener, *C. rhinoceros*, has been observed feeding on snails and *Norops* sp., but this is apparently the first record of *C. cultricornis* preying on a vertebrate.

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OEDURA RETICULATA (Reticulated Velvet Gecko). **PREDATION.** During an ecological and genetic study of the arboreal gecko *Oedura reticulata* in the Western Australian wheatbelt (between Kellerberrin and Trayning), I recorded two occasions of predation on the species by the Australian huntsman spider, *Isopeda* cf. *magna*. Observations were made in a 1-ha habitat remnant (31°18'S, 117°42'E; elev. 323 m) on *Eucalyptus salubris*, the tree species *O. reticulata* is thought to most prefer. At the first observation at 2320 h on 1 February 2006, the prey, a subadult *O. reticulata* (ca. 50 mm SVL; Sarre 1995. Austral. J. Ecol. 20:288–298), was found already dead. I made the second observation at 0114 h on 10 February 2006, after I released a gecko on its tree of capture. The attacked individual was an adult male (63 mm SVL). After releasing the gecko on one side of the tree, the spider, which had been sitting on the opposite side of the tree trunk, ran along the tree's surface and attacked the gecko. The gecko shed its tail and managed to escape. The *I. cf. magna* did not pursue the escaping gecko, but held onto the tail. Both spiders were adults, ca. 50 mm in body length (without legs).

Excluding potentially artificial encounters in pitfall traps (Bauer 1990. Herpetol. Rev. 21:83–87), predation by arachnids is thought to be common among geckos, but few observations exist from the wild. In particular, few reports exist of arboreal geckos as huntsman spider prey. For the arboreal species *Gehyra variegata*, an unsuccessful predation attempt by another species of Australian huntsman spider, *Holconia immanis*, has been recorded in Kinchega National Park, Western New South Wales (Henle 1993. J. Arachnol. 21:153–155).

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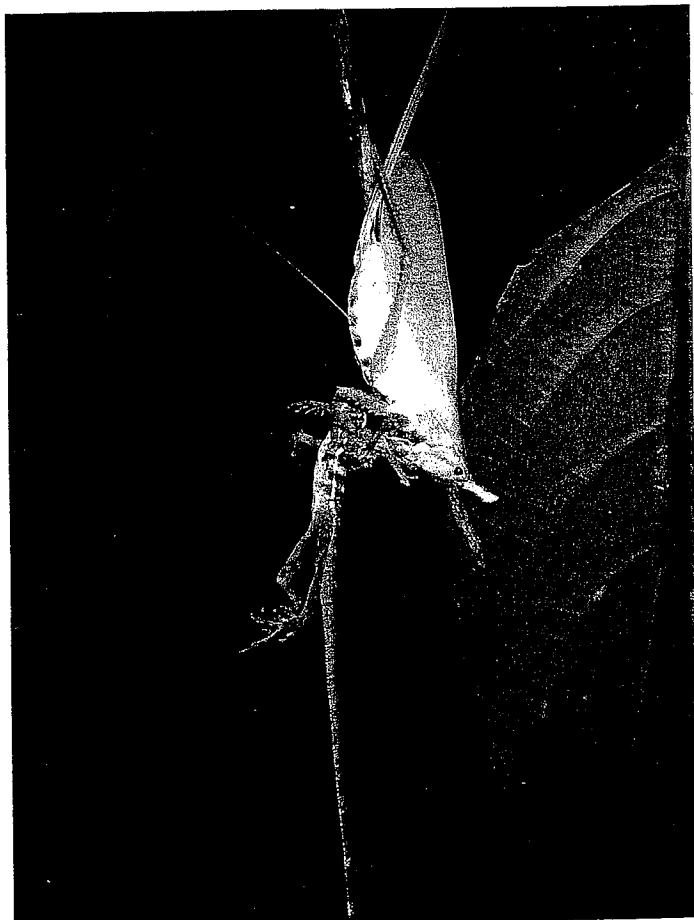


FIG. 1. A katydid (*Copiphora cultricornis*) eating a *Norops polylepis* along the Quebrada Agua Buena in Rincon, Costa Rica.

OPHISAURUS VENTRALIS (Eastern Glass Lizard). **FIRE-INDUCED MORTALITY.** Direct mortality to wildlife due to prescribed fire is of concern to land managers using fire as a manage-

ment tool. The ability of individual animals to escape fire is critical to the long-term survival of species inhabiting fire-maintained systems. Many wildlife species in Florida are both adapted to and dependent upon periodic fire to maintain suitable habitat (Myers and Ewel 1990. *Ecosystems of Florida*. University of Central Florida Press, Orlando, Florida. 765 pp.). However, species not adapted to survive in pyrogenic landscapes might suffer directly from fire-induced mortality; consequently fire might be a limiting factor. Long-term fire exclusion in many of Florida's forests, habitats that historically burned regularly under natural conditions (lightning ignition), have undergone shifts in vegetation composition, fuel loads (higher), and leaf litter accumulation (higher), essentially altering the vegetative associations (Myers and Ewel, *op. cit.*). Likewise, the suite of wildlife species that inhabit these systems might also shift over time (Myers and Ewel, *op. cit.*). We hypothesize that one such change could favor fossorial species that utilize the litter for cover and foraging. Without normal woodland fire return intervals, non-fire adapted species may be able to augment their populations to a "pseudo-elevated" status resulting in denser populations than were historically present. However, data concerning historical population levels of many species are often lacking and the documentation of wildlife mortality as a result of fire can be difficult.

The benefits of prescribed fire to endangered species and other wildlife in Southeast Florida natural communities are well documented (Myers and Ewel, *op. cit.*), in particular for the many threatened and endangered species found in Savannas Preserve State Park (Marti et al. 2005. *Endangered Species Update* 22:18–28; Cowan 2005. *Endangered Species Update* 22:29–39). However, during post-burn evaluations following five prescribed burns and two wildfires, dead Eastern Glass Lizards (*Ophisaurus ventralis*) were observed within three distinct conservation areas in Southeast Florida (including Savannas Preserve) between January 2003 and March 2004. Burned areas were surveyed to characterize the fires and at the same time were canvassed for wildlife mortality. *Ophisaurus ventralis* was the only lizard species for which mortalities were observed. One dead *O. ventralis* was found on each of two prescribed fires conducted at J. W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area, Palm Beach County Florida, on 15–16 January 2003. Burn unit sizes were 14.2 ha and 4.0 ha, respectively. One dead specimen was also observed following a 32.4-ha prescribed burn conducted on the North Fork St. Lucie River Preserve State Park, St. Lucie County Florida on 28 January 2003. On 15 January 2004, search of a 12.1-ha prescribed burn on a separate parcel of land within the boundaries of the same park revealed 8 dead specimens. Three post-burn observations were made at Savannas Preserve State Park, Martin and St. Lucie Counties, Florida. On 26 November 2003 following a 6.1 ha prescribed burn, one dead lizard observed; 30 July 2003 following a 0.8 ha wildfire, one dead lizard observed; and, a single dead lizard was also found following a 87.4-ha wildfire on 22 March 2004. Unlike many other amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals in Southeast Florida adapted to and dependent upon fire (Cowan, *op. cit.*; Marti et al., *op. cit.*), these observations suggest that this species, often associated with dense herbaceous growth, appears susceptible to some level of fire-induced mortality. Therefore, it may be to this species' benefit to apply patchy prescribed burns resulting in a mosaic of burned and unburned areas.

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PHRYNOSOMA CORNUTUM (Texas Horned Lizard). **POTENTIAL DIETARY THREAT.** Seed-harvesting ants of the genus *Pogonomyrmex* are important prey for horned lizards, including *Phrynosoma cornutum* (Pianka and Parker 1975. *Copeia* 1975:141–162; Sherbrooke 1995. *Herpetol. Rev.* 26:25–26). These venomous ants pose both biting and stinging threats to feeding lizards (Rissing 1981. *Ecology* 62:1031–1040; Schmidt et al. 1989. *Copeia* 1989:603–607). Though the coating of ants with pharyngeal and esophageal mucus secretions (Schmidt et al., *op. cit.*; Schwenk and Sherbrooke 2003. *Integr. Comp. Biol.* 43:1061; Sherbrooke 2003. *Introduction to Horned Lizards of North America*, University of California Press, Berkeley. 178 pp.) and blood plasma resistance to ant venom (Schmidt et al., *op. cit.*) provide protection during feeding on *Pogonomyrmex*, ingestion of other noxious invertebrates might not always be successful (Cohen and Cohen 1990. *Southwest. Nat.* 35:369; Manley and Sherbrooke 2001. *Southwest. Nat.* 46:221–222; Sherbrooke 2002. *Herpetol. Rev.* 33:312). Stomach analyses have often reported extraneous (non-food) materials assumed to be inadvertently ingested during feeding (Milne and Milne 1950. *Am. Midl. Nat.* 44:720–741; Pianka and Parker, *op. cit.*). Nonetheless, *P. cornutum* capture ant prey (Ott et al. 2004. *J. Exp. Biol.* 207:3067–3072; Ott et al., unpubl. data) using acute vision and split-second control of tongue-tip direction. During capture, ant prey are moved past a horned lizard's teeth without mastication into the esophagus via "pharyngeal packing" (Schwenk 2000. *In* Schwenk [ed.], *Feeding: Form, Function and Evolution in Tetrapod Vertebrates*, pp. 175–291. Academic Press, San Diego, California; Meyers and Herrel 2005. *J. Exp. Biol.* 208:113–127). The purpose of this note is to report an observation suggesting that during use of this prey-capture system, *P. cornutum* occasionally ingests items that present a dietary threat, and to note that this threat may be minimized by the lizards during prey selection.

On 2 June 2005, I examined the peritoneal cavity of a juvenile *P. cornutum* (56 mm SVL, 8.8 g) collected 27 May 2005 in Antelope Pass, Peloncillo Mountains, Hidalgo Co., New Mexico (Sherbrooke 2002. *Herpetol. Rev.* 33:21–24) and discovered an intact 12 mm long, sharply-pointed grass seed with three awns intact (*Aristida*, perhaps *purpurea*; identification by D. K. Aasen-Rylander and J. Bowers). No wounds were evident and the lizard appeared otherwise healthy, although externally the desiccated head of a *Pogonomyrmex* ant clung by its mandibles to a toe of the lizard.